

VZCZCXRO5009
PP RUEHPA RUEHTRO
DE RUEHNK #0315 1230933
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 030933Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8394
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMGH/MAGHREB COLLECTIVE
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0639
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0561
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0624
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 2166
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0971
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 0196

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 000315

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/02/2014
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SG](#) [MR](#)
SUBJECT: SENEGALESE STILL WANT TO PURSUE MEDIATION

REF: A. NOUAKCHOTT 306
[1](#)B. NOUAKCHOTT 290

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Dennis Hankins for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

[1](#)1. (C) During an April 30 meeting, Senegalese Ambassador to Mauritania Mahmoudou Kane downplayed President Abdallahi's decision to "delay" a visit to Senegal indicating that Senegalese Foreign Minister Gadio would return to Mauritania the week of May 3 to revive the mediation initiative.

[1](#)2. (C) Kane told Charge Senegal was still interested in facilitating a negotiated political settlement in Mauritania. Looking at the planned June 6 elections, Kane saw that the lack of political consensus, absence of strong opposition candidates, and technical failings would likely do little to resolve the political stalemate since a victorious Aziz will be hard pressed to claim legitimacy. Kane noted that Aziz had clearly been willing to delay the electoral process prior to his resignation and Kane believed Senegal could at least delay the process if serious talks took place. Kane saw mediation possible either before or after the June 6 elections, but thought waiting until later would only further complicate issues.

[1](#)3. (C) Kane became a bit evasive when talking about the format and policy foundation of any Senegalese-led mediation except to underline that they would be done in conjunction with the AU's Jean Ping. Kane suggested the talks, if they happen, should not start with any pre-existing conditions -- implicitly rejecting FNDD demands that any mediation be based on the previous anti-coup statements of the International Contact Group on Mauritania (ICG-M). Either through lack of knowledge or because he did not want to say, Kane was unsure what role others in the ICG-M might play in a Senegalese mediation. He said that press reports that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon would participate in the talks were incorrect, although he thought any final agreement would need broad international support -- including from the SYG through his Special Representative for West Africa Djinnit.

[1](#)4. (C) Kane dismissed FNDD displeasure over the fact that President Wade had received the credentials of the new (Aziz-nominated) Mauritanian Ambassador to Senegal days before President Abdallahi was due to arrive. "The don't understand how diplomacy works," saying the Mauritanian had been included with a group of others who has simply been waiting for the credentials ceremony. Kane also downplayed protocol concerns about whether Abdallahi would receive full Head-of-State honors saying, "President Wade is investing a great deal of his time and energy to finding a solution in Mauritania." Kane underlined that Senegal has suffered in the past from instability in Mauritania -- it does not want

to deal with the social and economic consequences of a new refugee flow from its northern border.

¶5. (C) Comment: While the Senegalese mediation would hold out some hope for the FNDD to, at minimum, delay the electoral process, the details (or lack thereof) of the Senegalese proposal are unlikely to appeal to Abdallahi and the FNDD. That said, a third Mauritania visit by Gadio in a month may make it difficult to say "no" to at least "talk about talking." End Comment

HANKINS